

### Remarks

Re-examination and reconsideration of the rejections are hereby requested.

Claims 1-121, 132-137, 141-145 and 148-150 are pending in this application. These claims are cancelled herein. New claims 151-170 are being introduced.

First of all, one of the inventors, Dr. Yves Schabes, and the undersigned attorney wish to thank Examiner To for according them a telephone interview of sufficient length to fully discuss the present invention and the prior art. During this interview a draft claim was discussed along with a screen dump illustrating the invention. Dr. Schabes explained that the present invention fulfills an information need based on documents such as web pages. The information need is expressed as a query containing a word and a symbol that matches any term. The method identifies one or more documents containing the word and locates one or more different terms at the location of the symbol in the query within the identified one or more documents. The located one or more different terms are then ranked using a metric related to the number of times the one or more terms was located in all of the identified documents.

As an example, the screen dump illustrated a query using the word "Microsoft" followed by the underscore symbol. The result of this query is an output in which ranked term 1 was "Windows", ranked term 2 was "Corporation" and ranked term 3 was "Internet Explorer."

Dr. Schabes emphasized that the present invention ranks *words* rather than *documents* as known in the prior art. For example, in the Colwell reference it is data files that are ranked as is made clear at column 8, lines 10-35 cited by the Examiner.

Just prior to the telephone interview Examiner To brought to applicant's attention five new references, namely, U.S. Patent Nos. 6,240,408; 6,275,820; 6,269,364; 5,715,443; and 6,490,579. These patents also rank documents, not words or terms. The Examiner acknowledged that the ranking of words rather than documents distinguishes the present invention from the prior art of record. The applicant is unaware of any prior art system that ranks words in response to a query including a specified portion and a symbol that matches any term and ranks the result.

During the telephone interview Examiner To performed an additional key word search and indicated that he received over 200 hits. The Examiner said that he would review these references and call the undersigned attorney by Friday, June 11 with the results of his analysis.

Thereafter, Examiner To called the undersigned with questions about the clarity of the draft claim. The claim was revised and is presented herein as new claim 151.

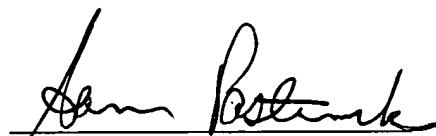
For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the claims newly presented herein are in condition for allowance and early favorable action is requested.

Please charge any fees associated with this filing, or apply any credits, to our Deposit Account No. 03-1721.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated:

6/15/04



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